projections of the Registrar General as on 1.3.2000, thereby increasing the total number of BPL families from 596.23 lakh to 652.03 lakh at the national level.

Based on poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for 1993-94 and population projections as on 1.3.2000, the number of BPL households in the State of Maharashtra is estimated to be 65.34 lakhs. This basis of estimation of BPL families for allocation of foodgrains under TPDS is uniform for all the States and cannot be altered for one State in isolation.

**Export of rice**

4554. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in 'NavbharatJTimes', dated the 12th April, 2002, under the caption "Behad kam kimat par kiya ja raha hai achchi kism ke chaval ka niryaat"; and

(b) if so, Government's response thereto and what corrective steps have been taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rice was being offered for export from the Central Pool ©Rs: 5650/- P.M.T. (raw) and Rs. 6000/- P.M.T. (par boiled) since 26.05.2001 for the financial year 2001-02. The said rates would continue upto 10.05.02. FCI has also allowed a margin of 2%+ equivalent percentage of reduction in brokens as per Bill of lading or 'H' form. The brokens are allowed to be sold in the domestic market.